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HARFORD RECOGNIZED AS "STORMREADY" COUNTY

(Bel Air, MD- January 5, 2009) - - Harford County Division of Emergency Operations has been recognized by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Weather Service as "StormReady". The renewal of this recognition is valid from 2008 through 2011.

Harford County was the first county in Maryland to enroll in the program back in 2002. The "StormReady" designation means Harford County meets all of the communications, safety and preparedness requirements necessary to help citizens within the county receive weather warning and respond appropriately to weather events.

Harford is now one of 12 counties in the state enrolled in the program.

The announcement of Harford County's renewed status of "StormReady" was made at the Division of Emergency Operations in Hickory.

"This continued recognition clearly shows your dedication to providing the citizens and visitors of Harford County with the best possible emergency management preparedness, National Weather Service Meteorologist in Charge James E. Lee stated. "The citizens of Harford County are well served by these capabilities and your efforts to constantly improve them," Lee remarked.

During the brief presentation, Lee commended Harford County Emergency Manager Rick Ayers, who he called "a driving force in maintaining community preparedness for the varied weather hazards that can strike Harford County."

Commenting on the special recognition the county's EOC achieved, County Executive David R. Craig stated, "We are honored to receive this coveted recognition by the National Weather Service. The dedication, commitment and service of our emergency management team, dispatchers and managers are second to none as they provide quality service to the citizens of our county 365 days a year."

Joining County Executive Craig at the recognition event were Director of Administration Lorraine Costello, Ernie Crist, Manager of the Emergency Operations Center, Larry Mabe, Deputy Manager, of the Emergency Operations Center and Rick Ayers, Emergency

Manager for Harford County.